

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
HATE INCIDENTS REPORT
July 2008 – June 2009

In August 1990, the Bloomington Common Council unanimously approved an amendment to the Bloomington Human Rights Ordinance that gave the Bloomington Human Rights Commission the explicit authority to collect data and issue reports on hate incidents in our community. We accept reports from police departments, individuals, groups and the media. We also accept anonymous reports. Our goal is not to investigate these incidents, as we do not have the training, authority or resources to conduct these types of investigations. Rather, our goals are to serve as a referral resource and sounding board for victims, to work with community groups to coordinate responses to hate incidents when appropriate and to make our community more aware of the prevalence of hate incidents through issuing these annual reports.

In July, 2008, we received a report from BPD about harassment at a bar. Three friends at a bar said that another patron came up to them, spat water all over them and yelled “tidal wave.” The three friends asked him why he had done that, and he responded by making rude and derogatory comments to the member of the group who was gay. A female member of the group tried to confront the man. He in turn called her a “Ch __ k” and told her to “f __ king speak English.” The man also threw ice at the group. The bartender later told the group they needed to leave; when they tried to explain what had happened to them, the bartender said they should have reported the problem to him earlier, but now they needed to leave. It wasn’t clear why they were asked to leave. They did not see the bartender ask the offender to leave. BPD investigated.

In July, 2008, we received a report from BPD and individuals about vandalism to an apartment. Three African American women, all IU students, came to their new apartment to do some painting before they officially moved into the apartment in August. They had trouble locking the door when they left and reported that to management. When they returned, they found that someone had entered the apartment and used the remaining paint to vandalize it. They wrote “F __ k you n __ _ er” in the bathroom, shoved a can of paint into the drywall, painted on the wall, discharged the fire extinguisher in the kitchen, detached the handrail and threw a microwave oven down the stairs. As a result of this, one of the women decided not to attend IU, at least at this time. Beverly Calender-Anderson and Barbara E. McKinney met with this woman and her family to discuss their concerns and to suggest resources.

In July, 2008, we received a report from an individual about racially offensive graffiti on a utility pole. Public Works painted over the graffiti.

In August, 2008, we received a report from a business owner saying that someone had painted a Star of David with a pitchfork on the building owned by the business. The graffiti was painted over.

In August, 2008, we received a report from BPD about internet harassment. A man reported that his daughter, a transgender person, participates in an on-line forum. Someone hacked into the forum and sent her harassing and threatening messages. The hacker(s) obtained the daughter's address. BPD investigated and provided additional patrols in the neighborhood.

In August, 2008, we received a report from BPD about vandalism to a car. A woman reported that someone had carved the words "retard" and "white trash" into the passenger door of her car. She has a son who is developmentally delayed. She suspected a neighbor whom she had seen near her car, who had used racial slurs in her presence and who had had an argument with her son. BPD investigated.

In August, 2008, we received a report from BPD about an incident allegedly involving a gun. A white woman reported that she had seen her neighbor, a black man, behind her house carrying a shot gun. She told the officers that she and the man had had arguments in the past because his dogs defecated in her yard. She said she suspected him of vandalizing her property in the past. Witnesses said that the man had cut across the woman's yard, but he did not have a gun. They said that she yelled, "What the f__k are you doing in my yard, n___er?" BPD officers told both the man and the woman to stay off each other's property.

In August, 2008, we received a report from BPD about an incident involving a verbal and physical dispute in a Bloomington neighborhood. A white woman reported that a neighbor was yelling at a family member on the sidewalk in front of her house. She told the neighbor to get off her property. Mutual shoving followed. Another neighbor told the investigating officer that the white woman who had filed the report repeatedly calls her "n___er lover" and her children "n___lets" because the children's father is African American. This neighbor said that the white woman who filed the report had yelled at the man to get off her property. He told her he was on the public sidewalk, not her property. She shoved him into the street and he responded by saying, "B__ch, don't push me, I'm calling the law." She then shoved him again, causing his cigarette to fly up and land on his shirt. He was by then standing on the street. The woman ran into the street and danced around him, acting as if she was going to punch him and possibly actually striking him. The woman with the biracial children told the officer that repeatedly, someone has written "n___er" and "n___er lover" in the dust on her car. She said she was told by the woman who harassed her that she (the harasser) had crosses with her biracial children's name on them. Police investigated.

In September, 2008, we received a report from BPD about an incident at a school. A mother reported that her son was experiencing problems with another student. The other student had been calling her son names such as "f_g" and bullying him. The other student jumped on her son's back and punched him in the face. Her son was able to knock the student off of his back. He said he did not fight back but tried to protect himself. He told the police that before the incident, he had called his fellow student an "a __ hole." The attacker was suspended from school for five days; the woman's son was suspended for one day. The mother did not want to press charges. BPD investigated.

In September, 2008, we received a report from BPD about an incident at a parking lot. Someone called the police to report a fight and said that the participants had mentioned a gun. BPD officers talked to three African American men at the location, who said that a car full of white males had driven by them. The white men in the car called them "n____ers" and one of them said they would pay the African American men money "if a n____er could kick their a____." The men got out of their car and a physical altercation followed. One of the African American men said that one member of his group had mentioned having a gun, but none of them did; they were just "talking s____t" and trying to scare the white men. He said that if he did in fact have a gun, the other subjects would be dead because he was not going to be disrespected in that manner. BPD could not find the white men.

In September, 2008, we received a report from BPD about an incident involving a couple who had recently divorced. The woman said that her ex-husband has been harassing her via e-mail and telephone messages. When he saw her at a bus stop, he called her new boyfriend a "n____er" and said, "KKK white power." She believed he told other people at the bus stop to beat her up. Later, he rode by her on his bicycle and made additional offensive statements about her new boyfriend. A warrant for the man's arrest for harassment was issued.

In October, 2008, we received a report from BPD about a white man harassing an African American woman. While both were waiting for a bus, the man called the woman a "b____ch," a "whore," "n____a" and told her to suck his d____k. She told him to stop and when he didn't, she asked a bus employee to call BPD. BPD found the man, who had gotten out of jail that day, to be intoxicated. The man also told the officers to "suck my d____k." Once arrested and placed in the squad car, he repeatedly banged his head on the window, and the officers had to provide additional restraint to keep him from hurting himself.

In November, 2008, we received a report from BPD about a dispute at a party. Two men, who had a history of not getting along, showed up at a Halloween party wearing the same costume. This led to an argument at that party, and then to another dispute at another party in mid-November. As one of the men was leaving the second party, the other man said to him, "You f____g." The first man said he was offended by this comment. A woman who was nearby, a friend of his, told the second man not to talk like that. The second man grabbed the woman's face and said, "What are you going to do about it, you f____king c____t?" The first man then stepped between the two and told the second man not to talk to women in that way. The second man replied, "What are you doing to do about it, you f____g?" The first man then punched the second man in the nose. The first man and the woman then left the party in a car. Before they drove away, someone jumped on the trunk of the car and hit it. The second man, in his statement to the police, said that the first man had approached him at the party, asked him if he had a problem, and then hit him in the face. He said when he and some friends left the party on foot, they were nearly run down by the first man's car. BPD investigated.

In November, 2008, we received a report from BPD about an incident near campus. A man told the officer that he was on the campus shuttle known as the "drunk bus" late at night or early in the morning. He said that while he was on the bus, two other men harassed him, calling him "f__ot" several times. They said they were going to beat his a__ and kill him, but did not say how they would do so or give any specifics. The man reporting the incident was intoxicated; he said the men harassing him were as well. BPD attempted to locate the two men but were unable to do so.

In December, 2008, we received a report from BPD about an incident at a bar. Two men said they were at the bar, talking to each other in Arabic. A man asked them what language they were speaking. They told him it was "mush" or "Mars" language, meaning it was none of his business. He then punched both of them in the face. The man who asked the question about what language was being spoken had a different version. He said that he recognized one of the two men as someone he knew from class, and he said "hey" to his classmate. His classmate's friend then began speaking "aggressively" towards him and "all of a sudden" punched him in the face, grazing off his cheek and not injuring him. He then punched both men in the face and left to prevent any further altercation. One of the men who had been speaking Arabic had a broken nose and was bleeding; the other man had an injured eye and some minor cuts. BPD charged the man who admitted to punching both of the other men in the face with misdemeanor battery and public intoxication.

In December, 2008, we received a report from BPD about an incident at a bar. A man said that he saw someone he knew at a bar, and for no reason at all this acquaintance got angry and struck him in his face, causing his cheek to swell. The bouncers escorted the offender out of the bar. Later the same day, the victim received an e-mail from the offender that said "I'm going to break your nose, mother f__ker. Hide behind your friends like the fairy you are f__ot (sic)." The offender told the police that the victim had been talking to his (the offender's) girlfriend at the bar. The offender pulled her away, at which time the victim told him he was fat, threw a drink in his face and knocked out his contact lens. He said he retaliated by hitting the victim in the face. He said he was drunk when he sent the e-mail message. The offender was charged with intimidation and battery.

In December, 2008, we received a report from BPD about vandalism. A woman reported that someone had scratched the word "f_g" on her car. She was not sure if this happened while she was parked on campus or when she was at a theater watching the movie "Milk," about the first openly gay elected official in the US, Harvey Milk.

In January, 2009, we received a report from BPD about harassing phone calls. A man with a Middle Eastern-sounding name had received six phone messages on his home phone. The messages contained extremely vulgar language directed to the occupants of the home; they didn't mention the occupants' name but did mention their race, ethnicity and address. BPD investigated and referred the man to the AT&T annoyance bureau.

In January, 2009, we received a report from an individual who was calling on behalf of a young gay man he knew. The young man had only recently come out as gay, and his roommate told him he was sick of the young man's "f_g friends." The roommate beat up the young man. BPD investigated. The landlord will likely evict the roommate; until then, the young man is staying with friends. The victim also called us and said he was having trouble getting a protective order so his landlord would evict his roommate; he was referred to the Protective Order Project and Student Legal Services.

In January, 2009, we received a report from BPD about an incident of verbal harassment. The BPD officer said he responded to a noise complaint at an apartment. The people making the noise, IU students, said they were having a party and celebrating because they had the day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, off. The officer told them to quiet down and that if he had to return, they would be arrested. Shortly after this visit, a neighbor called the police and said the people making the noise had come to his apartment, knocked on his door and called him a "f__king f__ot." He is gay and was greatly offended. The officer went back to the party apartment. The people at the party said they had talked to their neighbor, asking him to let them know if their music was too loud instead of calling the police. They denied calling him names. The officer told the people at the party to stay off the neighbor's property and to not talk to him, and they agreed.

In February, 2009, we received a report from BPD about an arrestee using offensive language towards the arresting officer. The officer said she saw a man walking downtown at 3 a.m., arguing with passersby and staggering. She stopped to talk to him and asked him for his identification. He said he wasn't driving, hadn't done anything wrong and it was "ridiculous" for her to be questioning him. She told him that public intoxication was illegal and that she had seen him arguing with passersby and staggering down the street. He again said the situation was "ridiculous." Under his breath, he called the officer a "stupid b__ch" and "racist." She administered dexterity tests, which he failed, and she arrested him for public intoxication.

In March, 2009, we received a report from BPD about a problem between roommates. A woman told BPD that her roommate had come home intoxicated and argued with her because she had invited a friend to their apartment. The roommate got mad and threw a bottle of soda and a glass of soda at her but did not injure her. Ever since then, the woman said, her roommate's behavior deteriorated. The roommate engaged in hostile behavior, including yelling at the woman for not picking up her dishes, calling her a "Jewish b__ch," telling her she needs to "get a real religion" and telling her she needs to "straighten her Jewish hair." The roommate also has told the woman she is a "fat b__ch," a "pathetic b__ch" and that she needs to go back to her own country. The woman said she cannot move out of the shared apartment. BPD referred the woman to the IU Judicial Board, as both women are IU students. BPD also talked to the roommate, telling her she needed to stop making these comments. The roommate agreed to stop calling the woman names.

In March, 2009, we received a report from BPD about a battery that occurred in a hotel room. Several people were partying in the hotel room. One of the guests, a white man,

said he had the right to use the word “n_ _ _ er.” Another guest, an African American man, disagreed. A loud discussion followed, at the conclusion of which the white man allegedly cut the African American man’s neck. The white man was arrested.

In March, 2009, we received a report from BPD about threatening behavior. A woman told the officer she had broken up with her former boyfriend because the relationship was abusive. He has since called her non-stop on her cell phone to harass her. If she doesn’t answer, he just keeps calling. When she said she would call the police, he told her he would meet her at the police station and shoot her in the head. He threatened to plant dope at her dad’s house and her friend’s house to get them in trouble, and at her house so she would lose her children. A friend of hers also reported that the ex-boyfriend has threatened her and her child; he hates her child because her child is bi-racial. She said he told her that he would “beat her like a man” because she is a “n_ _ _ er lover” and was turning his ex-girlfriend into a “n_ _ _ er lover” as well. BPD investigated.

In April, 2009, we received a report from BPD about vandalism of a car. According to the report, someone had painted a blue stripe on the passenger side of the car and painted the mirror blue. They also painted the word “f_ g” on the driver’s side door. On the hood of the car, they painted the phrase, “kid on bike.” The owner of the car said he did not know if this was a hate crime. He did not believe he had angered any bike riders in the area. BPD investigated.

In May, 2009, we received a report from BPD about vandalism. The report said that a man came home to find writing on the front of his house saying “f_ _ king f_ _ _ ots.” According to the police, the words appeared to be written with a permanent marker or a paint marker. The man also reported that a rocking chair had been taken from his front porch and thrown into the front yard, breaking several of the slats. The man said he didn’t know who would have done this, but suspected juveniles leaving a nearby facility. BPD investigated.

In May, 2009, we received a report from BPD about an assault. The report said that a white woman pulled up in front of her apartment with her children in the back seat. She said that there were two thin African American men yelling profanities at people in a SUV. She said she politely asked them to stop because of the children. They then started cursing at her, calling her a “white honky” and her boyfriend a “s_ _ c.” She went into her apartment. When her boyfriend asked them to stop the name-calling, they jumped him, kicked him and then ran away. A witness knew the two African American men, but only by their street names. BPD told the victims to call them if they saw the two men in the area again.

In May, 2009, we received a report from BPD about a fight on the street that involved racial and homophobic slurs. One of the victims said a white guy called his friend a “mother-f_ _ king gay” and punched another one of his friends. He himself got punched as well. Another victim said the attackers said they would get the victims deported, whom they called “brown,” and would “throw” them away from the United States. The attackers said the victims did not belong in this country because of their color. BPD did

not identify the race of the victims, but their names sounded Indian. BPD said everyone involved had been drinking. BPD was able to find one of the attackers, a white man, and charged him with battery and illegal consumption of alcohol (he was 20).

In June, 2009, we received a report from BPD about a fight. A man said he called several Hispanic men "s__cs." They in turn called him "Guido." (Urbandictionary.com defines "guido" as a "sad pathetic excuse for a male; not necessarily of Italian descent, but most likely; usually native to the New York/New Jersey tri-state area.") They jumped him, punched him and possibly broke his nose. The victim, who said he didn't know his attackers, did not want to press criminal charges. He was taken to the hospital by ambulance.